

# Desert Rifles

Issue 11

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## Defining the Future of Rifles Base

**Story and Photo by Spc. Justin A. Carmack  
350th MPAD**

AR RAMADI, Iraq--In early April 2003 the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment set-up shop in what was at one time a palace belonging to Saddam Hussein and members of the Ba'ath Party. The palace is located in Ar Ramadi, capital of the Al Anbar Region, northwest of Baghdad. The city and the palace will play an important role in the rebuilding of the Al Anbar Region and Iraq.

When the 3d ACR first arrived, the palace grounds were bare, stripped of anything which might have appeared to be valuable. When victory by coalition forces was imminent, workers from the palace looted every building on the grounds. They took anything that appeared to be valuable, painted graffiti on the walls and left the palace without looking back.

During the first couple of months soldiers from the 3d ACR inhabited the palace grounds they endured almost primal living conditions. Many of the soldiers had little more than roofs over their heads and Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) for every meal. Gradually living conditions at Rifles Base have improved, in part to the Contracting Officer, Maj. Robert Brinkman. Brinkman has been assigned to the 3d ACR with the difficult task of contracting construction projects and large purchases which may contribute to better living conditions for the regiment. Brinkman has played a part in making living conditions improve drastically for all soldiers within the regiment. Projects such as electricity, port-o-pots and refrigerators were contracted through him.

Though living conditions have gotten steadily better over time, there are many more improvement projects slated to take place. Projects currently going on include the installation of windows and air conditioners and, it is projected, that all soldiers within the Regiment will live in air-conditioned quarters by August 1, 2003.

"We usually start on projects that are common sense first, like air-conditioning," said Brinkman. He added that sleeping and working in the desert heat may cause a health hazard

for soldiers, and they are currently working hard to correct the problem.

Any unit may fill-out the paperwork suggesting projects, or the purchase of needed equipment.

Planning for showers, generators and various kinds of equipment has been arranged. Bids for the reconstruction of the palace are currently being taken.

Brinkman added that the contract for the chow hall located on rifles base was not contracted through him. However, they were made through a Contracting Officer located in Baghdad. The Contracting Officer in Baghdad is responsible for the construction of all dining facility contracts with Brown and Root.

**DILIGENCE--Locals Workers construct window frames, the first step involved with installing air-conditioning units into the buildings of Rifles Base. The men often work late into the evening to make better living conditions for Troopers.**



# 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment Round-up

By SFC Gary L. Qualls Jr.

**Special Correspondent to Desert Rifles**

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq - The final week of the Desert Scorpion phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom saw heartbreak, frustration, danger, a bit of fun and progress in 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment's daunting show down with anti-coalition forces in this part of the "Wild West of the Middle East."

The Regiment started the final week with a brief respite from the stress of their real world deployment with 4th of July celebrations across the unit's area of responsibility. Troops enjoyed American sports such as football, baseball and volleyball. They also enjoyed American food like hamburgers, hot dogs and ice-cold soda pop. Songs like Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." and AC/DC's "For Those About to Rock; We Salute You" filled the air. The celebration allowed soldiers to momentarily forget the hardships encountered during their present assignment.

Tragedy struck July 5 when an explosion killed seven Iraqi police recruits and injured 13 who were part of a group the Regiment had just trained up to police Ar Ramadi.

"It's very tragic," said Maj. Tony Aguto, 3d ACR executive officer. "We trained up this police force to protect the Iraqi people and now they've killed their own and only hurt themselves."

The Regiment has not only been training Iraqi recruits to police the inner-city, but has also trained them on running traffic control points and patrols.

Despite the blow to the order and stability of the city, the Iraqi police recruits remained steadfast, with the remainder of them reporting for duty the day after the incident.

The Regiment received more heartbreaking news July 10th when Teeba Ayaad, a four-year-old girl with cancer the Regiment had been helping from the time they arrived in country, passed away. The desperate quest of Teeba's father to get help for his ill daughter was an emotional roller coaster for not only Teeba and her father, but for the entire Regiment. The Regiment, through the frantic efforts of Capt. Edward Palacios, thought it had secured the sponsorship of the queen of Jordan for Teeba's medical care. At the last minute, however, the queen decided against it. Then, through more desperate efforts of Palacios and the full backing of the Regiment, another sponsor was found -

in Greece. This trip to desperately-needed help was delayed, however, when Greek pilots refused to land at Baghdad International Airport because of differences with a waiver pilots who land there are asked to sign. Another flight was rescheduled and special arrangements were made to transport Teeba to BIAP, to fly to Kuwait from there, where the Greek plane would be, and then onto Greece. Thanks to literally hours of persuasive pleading by U.S. Air Force doctors and a doctor volunteering to fly with Teeba and keep her on life support all the way to Greece, she did make the flight. Greek doctors didn't want to take her because the medical organization they work for, Doctors of the World - Greece, likes to only take patients with a decent chance of recovery.

The Regiment breathed a collective sigh of relief when Teeba made the flight, but then was disappointed and saddened to learn of her death several days after her arrival in Greece.

A high-level meeting relating to the security and stability of the region was held July 10. Regimental leaders met with the sheiks of tribes in the region. They talked about the top importance of the security of American forces as well as concerns the sheiks had about the perceived intrusive manner the Regiment's troops conduct raids. Col. David A. Teeple, regimental commander, reminded the sheiks they had agreed to help the regiment find individuals working against Coalition Forces and that if they followed through on their promise raids by the Regiment would not be necessary.

The Regiment is now seeing some progress in this area, according to Capt. Mike Davis, regimental battle captain.

The Regiment continued to share information with Special Forces detachments throughout Desert Scorpion, enabling it to apprehend several individuals conducting operations against Coalition Forces, Davis said.

The Regiment also enjoyed success with community service and humanitarian projects. The 4th Squadron, 3rd ACR, has started four women's clinics in the area surrounding Al Asad Air Base. This marked a breakthrough for Iraqi women, who had no outlets for medical treatment for six months prior to when the clinics start-

ed to open. Squadron female doctors are assisting Iraqi women in the clinics, which see about 50 women a day.

The Regiment has also been deeply involved in food drops - placing 40,000 rations from the World Food Organization - to food banks and hospitals not only in 3d ACR's area of responsibility, but in other units' areas of responsibility as well.

The 122nd Engineer Battalion is actively engaged in community service projects, working on playgrounds and soccer fields for Iraqi children as well as improvements for soldiers on Rifles Base.

Soldiers on Rifles Base are now enjoying the benefits of a new dining facility, courtesy of Brown and Root. Windows and air conditioning units are scheduled to be placed and installed in soldiers' quarters throughout the Regiment, although it could take months before some soldiers see that development.

Iraq is a precarious place for soldiers these days because the enemy is changing tactics, such as using Improvised Explosive Devices and mortars rather than rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire. More trickery is also being employed by anti-coalition forces, such as hiding spikes in the pavement on highways and camouflaging mines on roadways and using other means to disable vehicles in a convoy so soldiers are more vulnerable to an ambush.

The Regiment shifted to Operation Iron Grip on July 12. This operation remains focused on combat operations. Its objective is to locate terrorist camps and cells in 3d ACR's area of responsibility and render them ineffective.

"It won't be easy," Davis said. "It won't be an overnight solution by any means, but Coalition Forces' efforts will be successful because of U.S. resolve in this region."

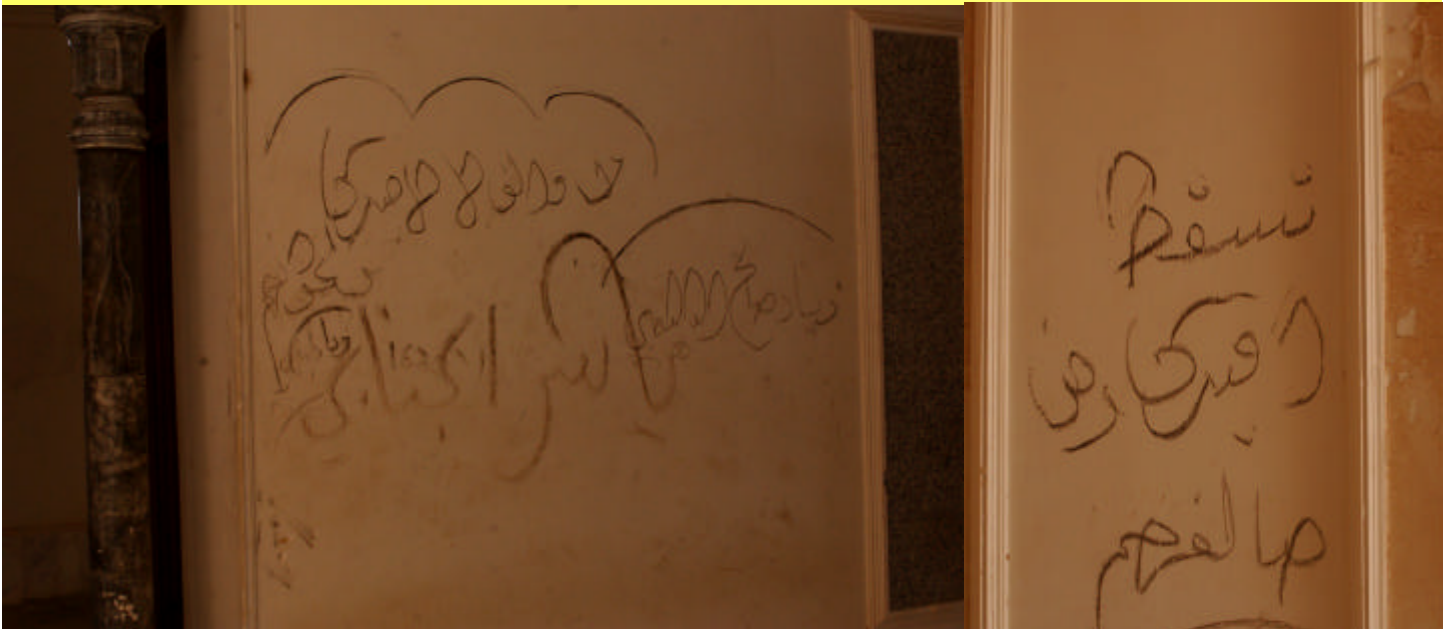
## HOURS OF OPERATION

**THE RUSTY SPUR DFAC**  
BREAKFAST 0530-0830  
DINNER 1700-2000  
**LUNCH AND MIDNIGHT MEALS**  
TBD

**TRIPLE THREAT PX**  
MON, WED, FRI 0900-1600  
SATURDAY 1000-1500  
SUNDAY 1300-1500  
TUE, THU CLOSED



# Writing On the Wall

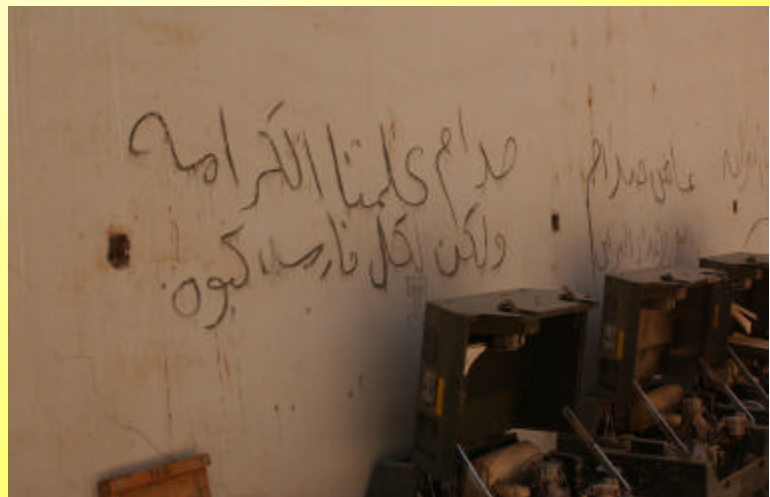
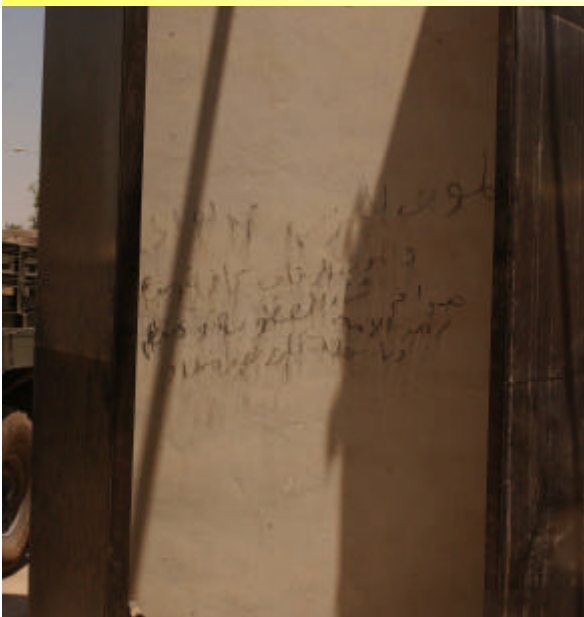


Photos by Cpl. Joe Niesen

Translations by Raphael Haddad

All over post there are reminders that this palace come military post was once one of the presidential resting spots for Saddam Hussien and members of the desposed Ba'ath party. Supporters, victims and looters have all left their mark on the walls, doors and other structures throughout the complex. Their graffiti is everywhere and as American soldiers, many without the ability to speak, let alone read Arabic, the meanings and messages once important to the author have been lost on the audience. Presented here are but a few examples of the marks that decorate the walls of rifles base. Some were left by supporters, others by enemies, and some just relate a name and a date; a simple I was here on the day that the regime fell.

(Clockwise from top) "No to the American Forces and Those who help, A thousand Nevers;" Names and Dates left by Looters; A poem relating "Death to Saddam, The Comrades (Ba'ath Party)" and others; Another poem, "Saddam taught us pride, but every rider will have a fall."



# Payday for former Iraqi Military Personnel

Story by Cpl. Joe Niesen  
350th MPAD

AR RAMADI, Iraq--Progress is being made on a daily basis for the citizens of Iraq. Food, shelter and security are steadily being provided by Coalition Forces as they attempt to bring stability to post-war Iraq.

In the Al Anbar region of western Iraq, the 3d ACR has recently begun returning some of the money seized during the war to the people in the form of stipends for former members of the Iraqi military.

"We had been taking about doing this for several weeks, it just took some time to get everything coordinated," said Maj. John Crean, 3d ACR Regimental Civil Affairs Officer.

Currently, the stipends can be picked up at a location near the Rafidian bank in Ar Ramadi. Those wishing to receive payment need only bring their Iraqi military ID card to this location.

"We are actually giving them more than what they were paid before the war, particularly the lower ranks," said Crean.

So far, the regiment has returned nearly \$100,000 to the people through these stipends.

Crean added that while regular soldiers would be paid once a month, conscripts were only entitled to a one time lump sum.

However, this situation is only temporary. It is designed to be an aid during this transitional period, said Crean. The monthly

stipends are not designed to be a steady source of income; rather they are designed to ease the transition for former soldiers as they reinstate themselves into the workforce.

Still, as the work of the Coalition Forces continues, more programs will be made available to assist the Iraqi citizens through this difficult period of adjustment.



## Malaria Pills

By Maj. Blake Graham

Malaria is one of the most common diseases of the world and one of the most deadly. These facts are unknown to most Americans since the disease is very seldom seen in the U.S. The disease continues to affect many countries of the world, including Iraq. Because it is known to exist in Iraq, it is important that military personnel take prophylactic medication to prevent disease while here. All military personnel deployed here should have started taking Mefloquine (one pill per week) or Doxycycline (one pill per day) prior to coming into the country.

For those who started Mefloquine, some have had to switch to Doxycycline due to lack of Mefloquine in theater. As we are able to obtain Mefloquine, those who had it previously can change back to it. Some simple guidelines for malaria pills are as follows:

Personnel who started on Mefloquine can choose whether to use Mefloquine or Doxycycline.

Personnel who started Doxycycline must continue to use Doxycycline. If there is some reason or desire to change, talk with your medical provider first.

Whichever of these medications you use; it should be taken after eating a meal. For Mefloquine it is best to take it after dinner. If you are changing from one to the other, you can follow the program below or ask your medical provider for guidance:

Doxycycline to Mefloquine - Take the first Mefloquine tablet on a designated day of the week. The day chosen should be the same as others in your unit - Monday is the default day. Continue to take Doxycycline until the second Mefloquine pill is taken and then discontinue Doxycycline.

Mefloquine to Doxycycline - Begin Doxycycline one week after the last Mefloquine tablet taken.

People who have not previously been taking Mefloquine or Chloroquine should not begin taking either without consulting their unit/area medical provider.

RSURG



# U.S. Army, Communities Plan to Better Iraqi Schools

By  
Sgt. 1st Class Gary L. Qualls  
Special Correspondent to the  
Desert Rifles

AR RAMADI, Iraq - School principals, community representatives and parents from throughout Al Anbar met in one of the first gatherings of its kind in this country - a democratic meeting about improving area schools on July 12.

The community meeting was a requirement of a grant program set up to refurbish schools. The program, administered by the United States Agency for Infrastructure Development, gives schools up to \$20,000 for needed supplies such as chalk boards, desks, fans, paper and pencils and virtually anything that is scholastically-related and deemed necessary by school administrators. The grants are awarded on the basis of assessments of school needs.

The 122nd Engineer Battalion, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, has been conducting the assessments and processing and submitting the applications for the schools.

There were 140 people and 30

schools represented at the meeting. Iraqi men as well as women stood up and expressed their opinion about how to best improve their schools. In the past, the populace was not involved in school improvements whatsoever. The government exclusively handled such matters.

Mixed view points were given at the meeting, some people wanting to continue handling school improvements as they had been handled in the past and some falling on the side of democratic solutions.

"It was a little chaotic," said Capt. Larrey G. Mouton, civil affairs team leader for 490th Civil Affairs Battalion (Abilene, Texas), describing the school-related forum. "People talked out of turn and sometimes we had to make them sit down."

The Iraqi citizenry will get "the hang" of democracy as time goes on, Mouton said.

So far 18 applications have been submitted for the grants and it looks favorable at this point that many or all will be accepted, Mouton said.

"I'm excited about this going forward," he said.

## RECENT TRADES IN THE WORLD OF PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL

Thursday, July 17, 2003

TEAM	
Cleveland Cavaliers	Signed guard Kevin Ollie, who had been with the Seattle SuperSonics.
Denver Nuggets	Signed forward Carmelo Anthony, their first-round draft pick, to a multi-year contract.
Detroit Pistons	Agreed to terms with guard Richard Hamilton.
Milwaukee Bucks	Signed guard Erick Strickland, who had been with the Indiana Pacers; signed forward Brian Skinner, who had been with the Philadelphia 76ers; signed free agent center Daniel Santiago.
Toronto Raptors	Signed center Mengke Bateer, who had been with the San Antonio Spurs.

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

TEAM	
Boston Celtics	Re-signed center Mark Blount to a multi-year contract.
New Orleans Hornets	Re-signed forward P.J. Brown to a four-year contract.
Chicago Bulls	Named Ron Adams assistant coach.
Denver Nuggets	Signed guard Andre Miller to an offer sheet.
Indiana Pacers	Re-signed forward Jermaine O'Neal to a seven-year contract.
Los Angeles Lakers	Signed guard Gary Payton, who had been with the Milwaukee Bucks; signed forward Karl Malone, who had been with the Utah Jazz.
Miami Heat	Signed forward Elton Brand to an offer sheet.
Minnesota Timberwolves	Signed center Michael Olowokandi, who had been with the Los Angeles Clippers, to a multi-year contract.
New Jersey Nets	Signed center Alonzo Mourning, who had been with the Miami Heat.

COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS?  
FEEL FREE TO DROP BY THE 350TH MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT MEDIA OPERATIONS CENTER AND DROP OFF YOUR CONCERNS.

## THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK ?

In the TV. show South Park, what was the main attraction at the military base in Danang where the characters Ned and Uncle Jimbo were stationed during the Vietnam War?

Last weeks answer:  
Your guess is as good as mine.

# The Back Page...

**TARNISHED REPUTATION?**--Lakers star Kobe Bryant attended the 2003 ESPY Awards. This was the first public appearance for Bryant since the sexual assault allegations that were brought forward two weeks ago. Bryant appeared to be in good humor. He declined all interviews.

**MAJOR LEAGUE UPSWING** - The American League won the All-Star Game 7-6. They came from behind for a late game rally to pull-off the victory. Hank Blalock entered the game as a pinch hitter and blasted a two-run homer in the eighth inning to lift the American League past the National League. The victory sealed home field advantage in the World Series for the American League Champion.

The game had a 9.5 percent rating Nielsen Media research said. The number of viewers took a large upswing in late innings while the American League was making a comeback.

**NOT AGAIN**-The second half of the 2003 baseball season began in an all too familiar way for one player. Injury-stricken Ken Griffey Jr.'s season ended with a ruptured tendon. He has not yet commented on returning to baseball.

## **BLAIR, BUSH DISCUSS IRAQ**

**By Jennifer Loven, Associated Writer Press**

WASHINGTON - President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair contend they won't be proved wrong in their prewar claims about Iraq's weapons capabilities. Even if they are, says Blair, a menace has been defeated.

"If we are wrong, we will have destroyed a threat that at its least is responsible for inhuman carnage and suffering," Blair said Thursday in a historic address to Congress. "That is something I am confident history will forgive."

"Given Saddam's history of violence and aggression, it would have been reckless to place our trust in his sanity or his restraint," Bush said. "As long as I hold this office I will never risk the lives of American citizens by assuming the good will of dangerous enemies."

With the carefully orchestrated statements, the two allies hoped to put to rest days of tough questioning on both sides of the Atlantic about the intelligence information they used to justify toppling Saddam Hussein. No weapons of mass destruction have been found in the more than three months since a U.S.- and British-led coalition ousted Saddam's government.

Recently, Bush has been under fire from Democrats for a claim in his Jan. 28 State of the Union address - based on British intelligence and key to the assertion that Saddam was reconstituting a nuclear weapons program - that Iraq sought to buy uranium in Africa. The White House now says concerns about the intelligence behind the statement should have kept it out of the speech.

"Saddam Hussein produced and possessed chemical and biological weapons, and was trying to reconstitute his nuclear weapons program," Bush said.

"We won't be proven wrong," he added. "I believe that we will find the truth. ... And that'll end all this speculation." And while Blair had opened the door in his speech to the possibility that weapons of mass destruction may never be found, he did not so do widely.

"If our critics are wrong, if we are right, as I believe with every fiber of instinct and conviction I have that we are, and we do not act, then we will have hesitated in the face of this menace when we should have given leadership," Blair said to applause from hundreds of U.S. lawmakers. "That is something history will not forgive."

Bush was clearly pleased. He called Blair's speech to Congress "fabulous,"

and congratulated his counterpart with a quiet "good job" as they ended their joint appearance before reporters.

The two then met upstairs in the residence for about an hour before departing the White House together. Bush went to Texas for a weekend of campaign fund-raising and a visit to his ranch by Italian Premier

Silvio Berlusconi, another ally in the Iraq war. Blair, who spent only a few hours in Washington en route to Asia, got a ride to his plane in Bush's helicopter.

Blair, the first British prime minister to address a joint meeting of Congress since Margaret Thatcher in 1985, entered the House chamber to thunderous applause that was repeated throughout his remarks. The warm welcome - "more than I deserve and more than I'm used to, quite frankly," Blair noted dryly - was a stark contrast to the heckling over the Iraq war he often receives in the British Parliament.

It was a speech designed to resonate uniquely with Blair's American audience. He joked about the British torching of the Library of Congress in 1814, saying "I know this is kind of late but - sorry," and spoke rousing of the meaning of American freedom.

Blair also paid tribute to America's superpower status, but with a gentle plea for the nation to work with others, not dictate to them. That effort, he said, should start with Europe - even though many of its major powers opposed the war.

"To be a serious partner, Europe must take on and defeat the anti-Americanism that sometimes passes for its political discourse," Blair said. "America must listen as well as lead."

The two leaders also defended the progress of postwar efforts to rebuild Iraq, insisting it will take time to build democratic institutions and a functioning society.

"We will stay with these people so in need of our help until the job is done," Blair said.

Desert Rifles is published by the 350th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment under the guidance of the Regimental Commander, Regimental Public Affairs Officer and editorial staff. *Desert Rifles* does not represent the opinion of V Corps, US Central Command or the Department of the Army. To contact *Desert Rifles*, send questions or comments to:

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